FINELINE

February/March 2008

www.finance.utah.gov

A Utah Department of Administrative Services, Division of Finance monthly communication service

Capitol picture taken by our own Jerry Gearheart

Establishing Accounting and Travel Policies

The State Division of Finance has statutory authority to create statewide accounting policies and procedures, including policies for travel reimbursements, which state agencies are required to follow. These policies and procedures are available at www.finance.utah.gov.

Applicable statutes include the following:

1. Utah Code Title 63A-3-103 establishes that the director of the State Division of Finance is responsible to "define fiscal procedures relating to approval and allocation of funds".
2. Utah Code Title 63A-3-203 states that the State Division of Finance shall "exercise accounting control over all state departments and agencies except institutions of higher education."
3. Utah Code Title 63A-3-107, states that the State Division of Finance is required to establish rules for in-state and out-of-state travel.

As you might expect, it is impossible to include provisions for every possible situation when establishing statewide policies. However, we do our best to make them reasonable for broad application across all agencies. We understand that agencies may need to clarify these policies for internal application in their agency; however, these clarifications should not be less restrictive than the statewide policy.

Recently, a few agencies were trying to clarify their internal procedures relating to travel reimbursements. They wanted to reimburse their employees at the higher mileage rate when a private vehicle was used for certain circumstances that were not outlined in the statewide policy. We had already considered these same issues and, for very specific reasons, did not include them in the statewide policy. Fortunately, when these agencies communicated with us, we were able to explain to them why it was important these additional circumstances not be included, even at an agency level.

Pushing the boundaries of statewide accounting policies and procedures, or not exercising good judgment when applying these policies to individual agency circumstances, may lead to more detailed and restrictive statewide policies.

If you have questions about the application of a policy in specific circumstances, or if you are wondering if a policy clarification for your agency is appropriate, we encourage you to contact Rick Beckstead (538-3100 or rbeckstead@utah.gov).

FINET 3.7 Upgrade

Over the past several weeks, members of the Financial Information Systems team within the State Division of Finance have been working hard to prepare FINET for a "minor" upgrade set to be implemented on the 31st of March. We've given the baseline application a solid testing, we've redeveloped and tested our Utah specific customizations to FINET, and we're in the process of verifying our system configuration settings.

The upgrade project is on track and all indications are that we will hit our goal of going live when FINET regularly opens the morning of Monday, March 31st.

The primary purpose of this upgrade is to include in the latest version of the application the modifications the State of Utah made during and after the last FINET upgrade.

An added benefit of moving to the most current version of the software is that we will also receive several other useful enhancements to the system. Here's a few:

- Page code leafing – A new text box appears in the upper right hand corner of FINET where you can enter a FINET page code and access that page directly without going to the Search Page Code page. It includes a pick list to search for the page code and you can use the back button to return to the previous page.

- Vendor Transaction History – A new search page in FINET will allow you to show transaction document data for a specific vendor. This functionality is very similar to the vendor history feature which existed in the previous version of FINET. Once a search results are displayed you can calculate totals, link to other pages related to the vendor and/or documents or download the results to Excel.

- The Payment Request Document (PRC) has been modified so it can now reference the Master Agreement (MA) directly without having to create a Direct Order (DO) first.

- Vendor Search – After this upgrade you will be able to use the FINET Vendor / Customer (VCUST) page to research vendor information. The upgraded system now allows us to "mask" or hide sensitive information on VCUST and give you access to the table. You can still use Data Warehouse for vendor research if you like, but the same information will now be available to you within FINET.

- Added Master Agreement Balances – Three new fields have been added to Master Agreement (MA) documents in the upgraded FINET: Order Amount, Expended Amount and Remaining (Available Amount). Now you'll be able to find these balances online in FINET as well as in Data Warehouse.

While most of the changes introduced by the upgrade will be minor, some of the enhancements have also caused us to upgrade our FINET training; however, this is not an upgrade that will require everyone to retake training. Online FINET 3.7 Upgrade training, which will include new screen prints and video explaining the changes in the upgrade will be available March 17th. Additional information regarding this training will forthcoming.

Using Both Vendor Legal Name and DBA on VCC's

Questions have arisen as to how to handle the setting up of a vendor where both the legal name and the DBA (Doing Business As) name are required on the check. This issue is easily resolved.

Printing Both Names on the Check

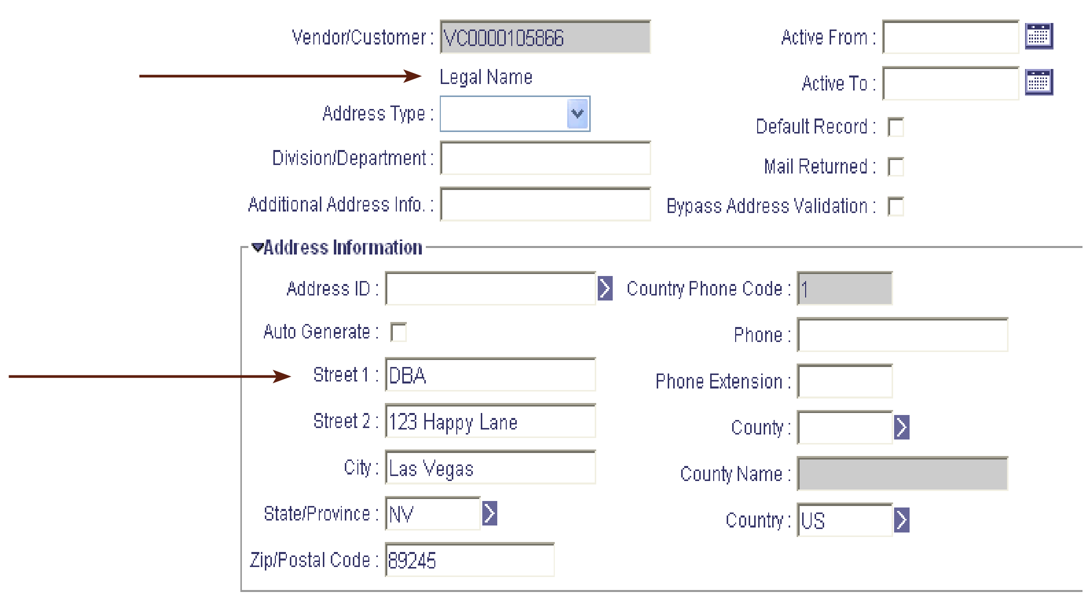
When originally setting up a vendor on your VCC document, go to the vendor/customer line and make sure the legal name and the alias/DBA are filled in. Then, in the *Disbursement Options* section on the same page, select '**Both**' in the '*Name on Check*' field. Both names will be printed on the check. If the vendor has already been set up with only the legal or the DBA name and you want both, send an email to FVENDOR requesting that both names be used on the check. Make sure to include the existing vendor number in your email and they will take care of that for you.

Showing Both Names on DO, PRC, or GAX Documents

If you would also like both names to appear on your DO and PRC or GAX documents as well as the check, you will need to include extra data in the address information on the VCC. (see picture below)

When entering vendor address information, use the *Street 1* field for the additional name you would like to appear on your document and enter the vendor street address in the *Street 2* field. If you have a street address and a PO Box number, put them both in the *Street 2* field. You must do this for the Procurement Address Type if you want them both to display on the DO and for the Payment Address Type if you want them both to display on the PRC or GAX.

VCC Document Address Section



Help Desk FAQs

by Ken Roner

Q. I know I can fix incorrectly scheduled pay dates on GAX and PRC documents on the DISBMD table. Is there a way for me to proactively look for these dates so I don't have to wait for the vendor to call me when they don't receive an expected check?

A. Yes, you can. This is done right on the DISBMD table.

What to do?

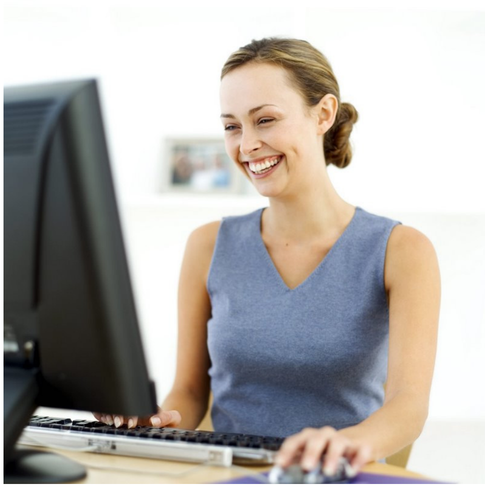
From the DISBMD table, enter your department number, the document type (GAX or PRC), and the document prefix followed by an asterisk (*) in the Doc ID field. Click *Browse* and view results. You should see a list of the documents matching your criteria. To the right of each document listed, you will see the associated scheduled payment date. If it is within a day or two of the current day's date, you do not need do anything and the documents will pay as scheduled. If the payment date has been scheduled too far into the future, click in the box in front of the document, enter a new Reschedule date and then click on 'Update Selected'. You may have to browse again to see the new scheduled payment date on the screen.

Subscribe and Unscribe to Finance Communications

The Division of Finance communicates important information through newsletters and emails sent to the individuals who have subscribed to receive them. Employees who regularly use FINET will want to subscribe to the FineLine newsletter for articles and policy information and to the FINET list server to receive pertinent information related to the day to day operation of FINET. Those who travel on a regular basis or those who arrange travel for others may find the Travel newsletter useful. Individuals who rely on Data Warehouse will need to subscribe to the Data Warehouse list server to receive those emails and employees involved in preparing payroll information will want to be included on the Payroll list server.

A new link on our homepage (www.finance.utah.gov) will take you to a new web page where you may subscribe or unsubscribe to these services. If you are receiving messages that you would prefer not to receive, at the bottom of communications received after February 21st, you will find a link to the web page where you may remove your name from any list you wish. If you have any questions please contact Marilee Richins at mprichins@utah.gov.

FINET Practice Sessions



Last month, we introduced you to the FINET Practice session to be held each Friday morning. We have decided to continue holding these sessions through March.

So, if you ever wanted to try the exercises on your own again after a FINET class, or if you would like to try some of your own documents in an environment where you can't hurt anything, this is the place.

Each Friday morning, from 9:00 a.m. to noon, we will make the FINET training area available to practice processing FINET documents and reviewing the results of the documents. The best part about the practice session is, if you make a mistake you can exit the document and try again. It won't hurt a thing. At the end of each session, we remove all of the entries and restore the training area to the way it was before the practice session.

We have created a FINET Practice class that you can access through iLinc, our class registration software. Once in the class, we will provide you with a user ID and a password, access to the FINET training area, and a chart of accounts for valid codes and budgets in the training area.

We will also provide a set of practice exercises for each process in FINET:

- Payment Documents (GAX, PRC)
- Purchase Orders (DO, PD, GAE)
- Requisitions (RQM, RQS)
- Cash Receipts (CR referencing RE documents and not referencing RE documents)
- Receivables (RE)
- Internal Transactions (IDT, IET, ITI/ITA)
- Fixed Assets (FA, FT, FM FI, FC)
- Budgets (BGAA, BGE44, BGR45)
- Inventory (SRQ, OC, TRQ, TRC, TI, TR, PI, CI, IA, IIA, RC)

You can review the associated inquiry pages as you process documents.

The FINET Practice Sessions will continue each Friday through March. If they prove to be useful, we will schedule them beyond that.

To join the practice session on a Friday between 9:00 a.m. and noon access our practice web site at: http://apps.finance.utah.gov:8090/quest/FINET/mergedProjects/FINET_Practice/FINET_Practice.htm

TRAINERS

CORNER

February/March FINET Classes

Cash Receipts
2/26 8 am – noon

Payables
2/26 1 pm – 5 pm

Inventory
2/27 8 am – 5 pm

Receivables
2/28 8 am – noon

Internal Transactions
2/28 1 pm – 5 pm

Receivables
3/18 8 am – noon

Requisitions
3/18 1 pm – 5 pm

Purchase Orders
3/19 8 am – noon

Payables
3/19 1 pm – 5 pm

Cash Receipts
3/20 8 am – noon

FINET Practice Sessions will run every Friday from 9 am to noon.

TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF THESE COURSES:

Link to: http://www.apps.finance.utah.gov:8090/quest/finet/syllabus/syllabus.htm. Course descriptions are available from the Finance Home Page at http://www.finance.utah.gov. Click on the Training button.